SACRED JOURNEY

THE JOURNAL OF FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

Winter 2012
vol. 63, no. 1

SACRED JOURNEY

THE JOURNAL OF FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

Fellowship In Prayer

encourages and supports
a spiritual orientation to life,

promotes the practice
of prayer, meditation,
and service to others,

and helps bring about
a deeper spirit of unity
among humankind.

SACRED JOURNEY

THE JOURNAL OF FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

Winter 2012, vol. 63, no. 1

Fellowship In Prayer, Inc.

291 Witherspoon Street
Princeton, New Jersey 08542-3227

PHONE: 609-924-6863
FAX: 609-924-6910
WEBSITE: www.fellowshipinprayer.org
EMAIL: editorial@sacredjourney.org

Executive Director
JANET M. HAAG

Editorial Projects Manager
LISA M. CLAYTON

Circulation Manager
LINDA D. BAUMANN

Cover Layout
SHARYN MURRAY

Board of Trustees
DAVID S. NEWTON, *President*
DR. EPHRAIM ISAAC, *Vice President*
LHAKTONG SÖNAM, *Secretary*
LORRAINE SCIARRA, *Treasurer*
HOWARD S. ENDE
SOHAIB SULTAN

Trustees Emeriti
BHIKSUNI KARMA TRIME LHAMO
REV. DR. ARTHUR CALIANDRO

Visit us online

www.fellowshipinprayer.org
Look under *Web Exclusives* for more articles, prayers, poems, and illuminations.

© 2012 Fellowship In Prayer, Inc.
All rights reserved.

Subscribe

Send your name, address, email, telephone, and $20 ($26 international) for a one year subscription (4 issues) to:

SACRED JOURNEY
Fellowship In Prayer, Inc.
291 Witherspoon Street
Princeton, NJ 08542-3227

Phone: 609-924-6863

Online: www.fellowshipinprayer.org

Submissions

We welcome submissions of articles on prayer, meditation, spiritual experience and practice, religious faith or similar topics, as well as prayers and poetry. We look for writing that expresses an individual's personal experience while also conveying a deeper message of universal appeal. Writing must be accessible to people of all traditions. Please include a brief biography and full contact information: name, address, phone numbers and email. Articles should not exceed 1500 words and should be submitted to the editor by email: submissions@sacredjourney.org. If necessary, they may be mailed.

Material in this publication is copyrighted and may not be reproduced by photocopy or any other means without written permission.

SACRED JOURNEY
is a registered trademark of
Fellowship In Prayer, Inc.

Contents

Winter 2012, vol. 63, no. 1

4
A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT
Out of my Depths!
DAVID NEWTON

6
A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Empty Shoes
JANET M. HAAG

8
COMPANIONS ON THE JOURNEY
An Interview with Helen Prejean

20
ILLUMINATIONS

22
The Story of Your Life
PAULA D'ARCY

26
SPIRITUAL PRACTICE
Metta Meditation
TRIME LHAMO

28
An Unlikely Alliance
RAIS BHUIYAN & MARK STROMAN

34
PRAYERS

39
Being Compassionate Animals
WALTER LONG

44
Dialogue Behind Closed Doors
FRANCISCO WILLS

48
A REFLECTION
Does No One Care?
CAROLYN FOOTE EDELMANN

50
The Empowerment Ceremony
JARVIS JAY MASTERS

56
POETRY

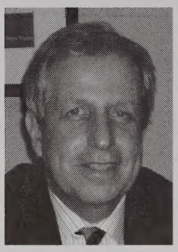
60
And What About the Victem
TOM KEEVEY

64
ENDPIECE
Seeking Evil, Finding Only God
MELODY ERMACHILD CHAVIS

Cover: Empty Shoes © Anna Savoia

Out Of My Depths!

DAVID NEWTON



Every morning an observant Jew, while reciting morning blessings, states:

> Blessed are you *Hashem* (God's name), our God, Ruler of the Universe who frees the captive.

The normal hurry of morning activity rarely allows me time to stop and contemplate this daily petition, but in writing my quarterly message for *Sacred Journey*, I now have the luxury to attempt to define what this blessing means to me.

Incarceration can take many forms and thus the blessing may apply to an abundance of situations in which a person experiences limitations. Physical imprisonment is the most obvious form of captivity; but there are many instances where captivity is not defined only by the stonewalls of a prison or the barbed wire of internment camps. Illness, physical or mental, being trapped in a bad job or miserable relationship, living in material and spiritual poverty and all forms of hopelessness represent limitations on our freedom.

In 1648 the English poet Richard Lovelace wrote:

> Stone walls do not a prison make,
> Nor iron bars a cage;
> Minds innocent and quiet take
> That for a hermitage;
> If I have freedom in my love,
> And in my soul am free,
> Angels alone that soar above
> Enjoy such liberty.

Captivity, the poet seems to suggest, is a mindset. Yet recently

I came across this comment by the convicted financier, Bernard Madoff, during an interview with Barbara Walters:

> I feel safer here than outside. Days go by. I have people to talk to and no decisions to make . . . . I know that I will die in prison. I lived the last 20 years of my life in fear. Now I have no fear—nothing to think about because I'm no longer in control of my own life.

What is it that sets a person free? Can a person confined to the narrowest of cells experience greater freedom than one who merits to walk the broadest places of our Earth?

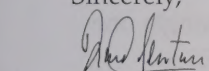
Several years ago I was invited to hear and subsequently had the privilege to meet Kerry Cook, who spent twenty years of his life on death row in Texas for a crime which he did not commit. He was violated in prison and brutalized by gross bureaucratic inadequacies and inefficiencies of both the legal and penal systems. Eventually, with the help of the Princeton based Centurion Ministries, he was fully exonerated. In Kerry, there is a soul containing great calm; an apparent absence of anger, rage and regret, an internal peace that can perhaps only occur after experiencing a living hell.

When faced with these circumstances the prayers we recite can truly have greater efficacy; I recall the words of Psalm 130, known in Latin as *de Profundis:*

> Out of my depths I called to you O God;
> God hear me; let your ears hear my prayer.

Please enjoy this issue of SACRED JOURNEY and may you experience relief, if not freedom from any confining circumstances you may be experiencing.

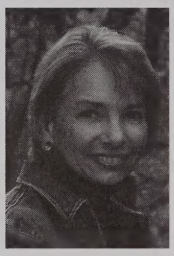
Sincerely,



David Newton

Empty Shoes

JANET M. HAAG



The cover for this issue of *Sacred Journey* features empty shoes. It is a powerful visual representation of the journal's content. We cannot really ponder a subject like the death penalty without fully acknowledging the individuals who once filled these symbolic shoes—whether they are the victims of crime, or those executed by the state. No matter how the shoes are emptied, we all suffer the loss and we all contribute to decisions that ultimately leave us with empty shoes.

Exploring a topic like this evokes a complex interplay of thoughts and emotions about justice and freedom, crime and punishment. It is not easy to confront brutality, whether individually chosen or socially sanctioned, hidden in the recesses of our own hearts, or splashed across the headlines. And it all comes back to how we live our human freedom. In principle, everyone is for freedom—that is, until in practice, an opposing faction tramps on ours while exercising theirs.

We often think of freedom as doing what we want, when we want and how we want, but all freedom is situated, confined, if you will, by circumstances and people, beliefs and values, what we know and don't know... and to be true to the ideal, its expression should be limited by our brothers' and sisters' needs. If we lived in this awareness and were committed to the Golden Rule of "loving our neighbor as we love ourselves," truly understanding what love is—we would be inner-directed, self-actualized, compassionate human beings, every single one of us, and the world would be an idyllic "Garden of Eden." However, this is not the case. The world we inhabit is messy;

people are wounded, and we are all trying to juggle freedom and responsibility, with varying degrees of success.

Given this reality, the men and women who share their stories in the following pages are simply inviting us to walk in their shoes—if only for a moment—perhaps, to look at life and death from a slightly different angle, to share their pain, to suspend a rush to judgment, to consider a stand, or perchance, take one when it comes to state-sponsored execution.

To do this, we might have to take off our own shoes, and affirm the Sacredness of vulnerability and ambiguity. Let's dare to walk on! SJ

An Interview with Helen Prejean

Sister Helen Prejean SSJ has been instrumental in sparking international dialogue on the death penalty and helping to shape the Catholic Churches newly vigorous opposition to state executions. In 1993 Sister Helen told the story of her experiences as a spiritual advisor to a death-row inmate in Dead Man Walking: An Eyewitness Account of the Death Penalty in the United States. *This book was number one on* The New York Times Best Seller List *for 31 weeks, has been translated into ten different languages, was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize and made into an Oscar winning motion picture and internationally acclaimed opera. Sr. Helen has divided her time between educating citizens about the death penalty and counseling individual death row prisoners. She has accompanied six men to their deaths. In doing so, she began to suspect that some of those executed were not guilty. This realization inspired her second book,* The Death of Innocents: An Eye Witness Account of Wrongful Executions (2004). *Her new book* River of Fire: Journey into the Death Penalty *is slated for release later this year. She is the founder of Survive, a victim's advocacy group in New Orleans, a member of Amnesty International and the Honorary Chairperson of the Moratorium Campaign, a group that gather signatures for a world-wide moratorium on the death penalty. Sister Helen has received numerous honorary degrees, as well as many peace and ethics awards for her work.*

Fellowship In Prayer: For many years you have been engaged in ministering to death row inmates and in advocacy for the abolition of the death penalty. Where do you find the hope and inspiration to continue your work?

Sr. Helen Prejean: I find hope and inspiration for my work in its practice, in the integrity of moments shared with six different human beings, cuffed hand and feet being led to their deaths. Being with these human beings—most of whom are guilty of horrible acts that almost defy description—I nonetheless have the opportunity to experience the dignity in each one of them—to see in the person about to be killed some kind of peace or love. Facing death becomes an act of trust that inspires me and hopefully will one day help me with my own death.

What drew you to this level of commitment to death row inmates?

In the first part of my book, *Dead Man Walking,* I talk about my spiritual journey. It was the Gospel that really drew me into this, although I didn't fully understand it until about 1980. I grew up in the 40s and 50s. I had no idea what was going on in the inner city—I didn't know any black people. I didn't know there were police who were beating people up just because of their race, or planting drugs on young black guys and then throwing them into prison. These things could have been happening right in my own backyard but I lived in a different spiritual universe. When I was in high school, a portable electric chair was being trucked around to local jails and courthouses to mete out justice in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, but I wasn't aware of it. It wasn't in my consciousness. I often think this lack of consciousness is why we have the death penalty— because people lead busy lives, they go to work, they come home, they spend time with their families. No one thinks

about the death penalty because we are so far removed from it. We tend to compartmentalize our lives. We tell ourselves, "Well, those are the poor and, yeah, they struggle and all that, but . . ." and we go on about our lives. However, there are 2.3 million people in prison. Many never see or hear them. Yet we are told, "Well, those are the bad people from whom we have to be protected."

I began my ministry working in a center for people who had dropped out of school. I started to realize what was going on in the public schools, how they were failing people and what terrible things were happening to the poor who didn't have health care. I began seeing things I hadn't seen before because I had been privileged in so many ways.

One day a friend who worked in the prison coalition office, right around the corner from Hope House where I was working, invited me to be a pen pal to someone on death row. I responded, "Yeah, sure, I can do that. I can write letters." At the time I thought I was just going to write a letter or two to this man. The problem was he wrote back. And when people encounter each other that is when the adventure begins. It was 1982 and no one in the Louisiana prison system had been killed in twenty years. I never would have dreamed they would kill my pen pal but in April 1984 I walked into the darkness outside a Louisiana prison gate, having just come from the execution chamber where Patrick Sonnier had been electrocuted to death in front of my eyes. I was stunned. I threw up. And then I thought: "What am I going to do now?" I never imagined I was going to get involved with someone on death row. I didn't become a nun to do this but after my experience with Patrick Sonnier, I knew that if the American people could be brought close to the reality of the death penalty, they would reject it because when you're up close to it, you see what it really means for people to kill other people. He became my inspiration and the central character in my story *Dead Man Walking*.

What is the most profound experience or transformation you've encountered in your ministry and what role did faith or spiritual practice play in it?

One profound transformation was what happened inside of me, my realization that the Gospel of Jesus wasn't just about Jesus and me, and going to church, and loving my family, and being charitable. I was awakened to social justice. Through my experiences, I realized that at the heart of the Gospel are marginalized people, those who are despised in our society. The call of Jesus is to go and be with the abandoned, the poor, those most in need, living right under our noses in every inner city. Becoming involved with helping those who have no voice and participating in acts of justice transformed me. It got me out of a very pious little world in which I thought, "I'm a nun and I'm going to do good things for people." Being in the midst of poverty and seeing what it does to people set me on a course of transformation. Just as the prophets, Jeremiah and Isaiah, were called and just as Jesus was called—I felt called to bear witness, to go out and tell the stories for those who had no voice.

Many people look at my work and say, "It must be overwhelming," but I am really just a storyteller. Through story and personal experience I invite people to look more deeply into their hearts. Long ago I found that when we ask people "Are you for the death penalty?" they say "Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah." But in reality, it is an unreflective response coming from the surface of their souls. What my stories ask people to do is take a deeper look, to go below the roiling currents and the froth on the top of the water and delve deep. It is a sacred journey and my mission is to take people on this journey. There is hope, because most people come to a deeper level of understanding in the process. If someone spends an hour with me exploring both sides of the issue, and deeply experiences feelings of agony and outrage over the crime, they understand it is not simple to

forgive. It is not as though Jesus told us to forgive and therefore, we feel no agony or outrage. Spirituality is all about being able to go to the opposite poles inside our souls and reconcile them. In the end, it has to be all about love. It has to be about forgiveness. It has to be about life, rather than death, because that is what we are created for. This is the journey. It is what I do.

When I get out on the road and meet the American people, I realize they aren't clamoring for the death penalty. More often than not, they simply aren't thinking deeply about it. I talk to them for five or ten minutes, raise a few questions that get them to look below the surface and then they start to say, "Oh, I didn't know it was like that." Who knows what it is like for a guilty person to be in a cell, waiting to be killed? Who knows about all the mistakes made in our justice system? Who does really know much about all the innocent people who have been taken off death row? Most people don't know how the death penalty comes down on people. Less than one percent of the 15,000 people convicted of homicides in this country are chosen to die. Guess who gets chosen to die in the United States most of the time? Poor people. They are selected because they often have a terrible legal defense. This is why we have so many innocent people eventually set free. The facts of crimes aren't always properly reported at trials. The justice system favors an adversarial form of prosecution and if the accused doesn't have an adversarial defense, the truth doesn't come out. After running on the appeals court treadmill for awhile, the poor person is bumped off the end and killed. There is no real justice in this.

I understand you often pray with death row inmates prior to their executions. On what does prayer center at these times?

When we come to pray at the end of someone's life, naturally, the tendency is to think, "Well this must be the perfect prayer

because it is being prayed as the last act of life," but actually the prayer at this last moment is connected to all the other prayers we have prayed together, "I'm about to step over and entrust my life to God. I am sorry for what I have done that has hurt others, and I am asking for grace." The inmates with whom I've prayed ask that their legs will hold them up, that they will be able to walk with dignity to their death, even though they know they are going to be killed against their will.

As you might imagine, there is great anxiety during this prayer. It's as if we are both caught in a wave that is overpowering, propelling us toward that final moment. Four hours to live. Three hours to live. Two hours to live. However, I believe their prayer is the same as my own prayer is going to be when I move to the end of my life—"Have mercy, Jesus, have mercy on me. Help me to make this passage." And, the people I've been with, almost all of them pray for those they have hurt and for the families of those they have hurt. Often, their last words are "Forgive me for the hurt I've caused you."

How important do you think remorse and forgiveness are to the healing process?

Lloyd LeBlanc, whose only son, David, was killed by Patrick and Eddie Sonnier, nonetheless struggled when Patrick was executed. Everyone had told him, "Lloyd, you have to be for the death penalty. You should ask for the death of the one who killed your son. To ask for anything less than death means you didn't love your son." But Lloyd said, "They killed my son. I am not going to let them kill me too. I don't like the way bitterness makes me feel and if I pursue revenge, I will die inside." So, Lloyd decided to do what Jesus said to do and he set himself on the path of forgiveness and found peace. He said he would never find peace in the killing of another. Lloyd LeBlanc is the real hero of *Dead Man Walking*.

Do you find many families of victims able to forgive or do many hold onto their pain and anger?

Both. Every human being is a mixed bag. Death row inmates are not alike. Nuns are not alike. Victims' families are not alike. Of the victims' families that I have met, some don't seem to be able to make it through to forgiveness but I'm not the one to judge them because I haven't been through their horrible trauma. However, I do think the state and federal governments offer them an illusion of healing by saying, "Look, you've suffered the ultimate loss through the murder of your loved one, so what we will do now is kill the one who killed your loved one, and you can watch. This is going to give you healing and closure." For the victims' families I've talked to, the experience is instead very traumatizing. I believe it is a way our society tries to legitimize killing people, using the illusion that execution is going to heal the victim's family, that justice will be served. Break this notion down and justice means nothing more than a killer is killed and those most hurt by the crime get to watch. Is this justice?

All kinds of euphemisms are used to justify killing people. If we are fighting terrorism, we say we are "keeping ourselves safe." Killing people in death chambers is not even called killing—it is referred to as "execution." A quarterback "executes" a pass; businesses "execute" business plans. To "execute" just means to carry out. We don't want to call what we do in the death penalty "killing," even though the death certificate lists the cause of death as homicide! This is the only time in the entire process that what we are doing is called by its real name. You see, cause of death can't be listed as execution—execution of what? We don't want to call what we do "killing" because we don't want to be bad people. We want to be good people and we want to frame what we do in terms of virtue and goodness.

Do you think at the end that most death row inmates take

responsibility and feel remorse for their acts?

A person's ability to be conscious of his responsibility has a lot to do with his sense of self. I was with one man, Robert Willie and it was very tough for him to take responsibility for his involvement in the murder of a young girl. He even took a polygraph test on the day he was executed because he wanted his mama to know that it was the other man, Joseph Vaccaro, who had been the one to stab the girl. In *Reflections on the Guillotine*, Albert Camus wrote that people who commit a crime are always innocent in their own minds and so they look for ways to prove this however they can.

Once a warden in Louisiana tried to get a last minute confession from an inmate, Dobie Williams, while he was on a gurney. He asked Williams, "Is there anything you want to tell me about right now for which you are sorry?" Williams answered that he was sorry he had disobeyed his mama and had gone drinking with his cousin, Fred Harrison—putting him on the streets in Manning, Louisiana, the night when a woman was killed. He was sorry he got pulled into the whole thing and pulled his family in but he insisted he hadn't killed anyone.

Some human beings can have a difficult time taking responsibility for their actions and others can more easily say, "I'm sorry." Although Robert Willie had trouble owning his involvement in murder, at the end just before he was killed, he said to the victim's family, "I hope my death gives you some peace." That was as loving a thing as Willie could say. "I hope my death gives you peace." These were his last words.

To what extent are you involved with victims' families?

I am primarily involved with the family of the one who is on death row. The victim's family usually cannot countenance me because they see me as giving spiritual solace to the one who killed their loved one. They do not see me as seeking justice.

They almost always identify me as an enemy and yet I feel such compassion for them because they are already traumatized and then they are caught up in a system that promises closure but keeps their souls open and raw, waiting for the killing of the one who took their loved one. Some families wait twenty years. Just imagine what is happening inside a person who must wait this long to be consoled!

More and more, I am hearing from psychologists that if we stay with anger and bitterness too long it will destroy us. And they are not speaking from a religious point of view but from one of psychological well-being. In the beginning, anger is often what keeps a victim's family from imploding and committing suicide. Anger is the adrenaline that keeps them going but if the anger stays inside them too long, it can kill them. That's what Lloyd meant when he said, "It's going to kill me." When we hold onto anger, it dominates our life. It dominates our thoughts and our dreams. There is a Native American proverb that reminds us of where anger leads us, "The person who sets out on the journey of revenge should first dig two graves." Real spiritual freedom is required to break away from such anger.

How do you apply principles of restorative justice in your work with inmates and the families of their victims?

Well, I always work with the inmates to make some kind of outreach to the victim's family to express their sorrow. I also try to make sure victims' families have what they need. To achieve real restorative justice, a transformation needs to occur in society. We need to realize that rather than spending enormous amounts of money on killing people we consider our enemies, the whole prison system needs to help restore the people sent there. Then our "enemies" could become productive citizens in society. So practically speaking, restorative justice means that if many of the people in prison have committed crimes as a result of addiction to drugs or alcohol, we should restore justice by

establishing more drug rehab centers, especially for the poor. They will have to deal with their addictions in order to stop their criminal behavior.

What role do you think the media and news coverage play in our cultural perception of the death penalty?

Discerning the influence of the media is a very important part of making a spiritual journey. The old adage is true—"Crime sells newspapers." For example, many peaceful things go on in the city of Indianapolis every day—people go to school and work, they do all sorts of activities—but what is ferreted out for the evening news? Who got mugged, who got raped , who got robbed. These stories are reported because they provide the highest drama. The media present people doing terrible acts.

A study of local nightly newscasts showed that if on a particular day, there was no local crime to report, attention was shifted to cover some trauma somewhere—a forest fire, people caught in a tsunami, an earthquake, or some other disaster. What does this tell us about our media and what we are being fed?

How we perceive things is shaped by cultural norms. If we are told, "This death is going to give you peace," and "It is the way to honor your loved one who was killed," then we think it is what we should do. A real struggle ensues when a victim's family doesn't believe in the death penalty and they know they can expect to be told by some people, "Well, it's a shame you didn't love your child."

With the death penalty, our culture says that violence in return for violence is going to be redemptive in some way but this is the very opposite of Jesus' Gospel, the opposite of what my faith tells me. As long as we're bent on the destruction of someone we consider our enemy, we too will be destroyed and we won't even realize it is happening.

In what ways do you think we, as members of a larger society, are responsible for the injustices that occur in our world?

Dostoevsky, the Russian author, once wrote, "A society can be judged by the quality of its prisons." In the United States we are very individualistic. We look at a crime and quickly point to the perpetrator saying, "Look how terrible that person is for committing that crime." We tend to blame the individual without examining the larger context in which the crime was committed or the environment in which the perpetrator grew up. We fail to recognize the interconnectedness that makes us all responsible in some way for everything that happens. We think that if we place responsibility on society, we are excusing the behavior of the individual. In American society we need to start talking about "we" and "us," not just the singular "I" and "you." When someone in our community commits an angry act, we have to look at ourselves as a community and ask, "What is it that we are lacking, what have we failed to do that left this person feeling so isolated?" It is not as though we aren't going to hold people responsible for their crime, it's just that we need to realize we bear some collective responsibility if we are going to change things.

The goal of spirituality is to recognize we are all 'one,' we are all connected. Every person is our brother and sister, and we are also all connected with our planet Earth. We are meant to live in compassion for and with each other.

What did it mean to you when you were awarded the World Methodist Peace Award for "courage, creativity and consistency"?

Well, it was interesting, all right. You know, I just try to stand in integrity and do what I believe God is calling me to do. So, when people give me awards or when people send angry letters

saying, "Who do you think you are? You are not a real nun," neither action affects me all that much. I am always glad to receive an award because it sheds light on the cause. I picture myself as glass, and hope that people will look through me to the death penalty, and see it as one of the big moral issues of our day. I hope I can energize them to get involved.

Each of us lives inside our own soul and our own conscience, and we should listen to that still, small voice telling us who we are supposed to be and what we are supposed to do. I've gotten a chunk of honorary doctorates and other awards, but I just tell myself, "I am who I am. I will stay true to who I am." And every day I pray for the grace to be a decent human being and do what I'm called to do.

What do you say to your critics?

There is a principle in the spiritual life that, we do what we do because it's the right thing and not because we seek something for ourselves. I am not seeking fame. I do what I do for the same reasons that you do what you do at Fellowship In Prayer and in *Sacred Journey*. My critics simply don't see the reality I see, so I understand their need to rant and rave but I don't let their criticism touch my inner soul.

I'm glad you don't let criticism touch your inner soul. You are a woman of integrity and compassion and the work you do is admirable. Thank you for taking the time to talk to me about it.

It's been a joy talking with you. Good luck with the journal. I love what you are doing!

Thank you. SJ

OUR WORST FEAR IS NOT THAT WE ARE INADEQUATE;
OUR DEEPEST FEAR IS THAT WE ARE POWERFUL BEYOND
MEASURE . . . . AS WE ARE LIBERATED FROM OUR OWN FEAR,
OUR PRESENCE AUTOMATICALLY LIBERATES OTHERS.

MARIANNE WILLIAMSON

As long as the candle burns,
there is time to make repairs.

RABBI SALANTER

Through violence you murder the hater,
but you do not murder the hate.
Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.

REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

He who cannot forgive breaks the bridge
over which he himself must pass.

GEORGE HERBERT

." . . IF ANYONE KILLS A PERSON—UNLESS IT BE FOR MURDER OR FOR SPREADING MISCHIEF IN THE LAND—IT WOULD BE AS IF HE KILLED ALL PEOPLE. AND IF ANYONE SAVES A LIFE, IT WOULD BE AS IF HE SAVED THE LIFE OF ALL PEOPLE"

QUR'AN 5:32

I TRY TO REMIND MYSELF
THAT WE ARE NEVER PROMISED ANYTHING,
AND THAT WHAT CONTROL WE CAN EXERT
IS NOT OVER THE EVENTS THAT BEFALL US
BUT HOW WE ADDRESS OURSELVES TO THEM.

JEANNE DUPRAU

The path of progress has never taken a straight line, but has always been a zigzag course amid the conflicting forces of right and wrong, truth and error, justice and injustice, and cruelty and mercy.

KELLY MILLER

FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION ARE NOT JUST ETHEREAL, SPIRITUAL, OTHER-WORLDLY ACTIVITIES . . . THEY ARE REAL POLITIK, BECAUSE IN A VERY REAL SENSE, WITHOUT FORGIVENESS, THERE IS NO FUTURE.

DESMOND TUTU

It is a man's own mind,
not his enemy or foe
that lures him to evil ways.

GAUTAMA SIDDHARTA

Power based on love is a thousand more times more effective and permanent than the one derived from fear and punishment.

MAHATMA GANDHI

THE BULLET THAT KILLS IS ONLY THE FINAL INSTRUMENT OF THE HATRED THAT BEGAN BEING NURTURED IN THE HEART LONG BEFORE THE GUN WAS PICKED UP.

HENRI NOUWEN

THE DIVINE JUSTICE AND WISDOM
CANNOT BE COMPARED TO THE
EVER-CHANGING MAN-MADE LAWS.

SHAID ATHAR

The Story of Your Life

PAULA D'ARCY

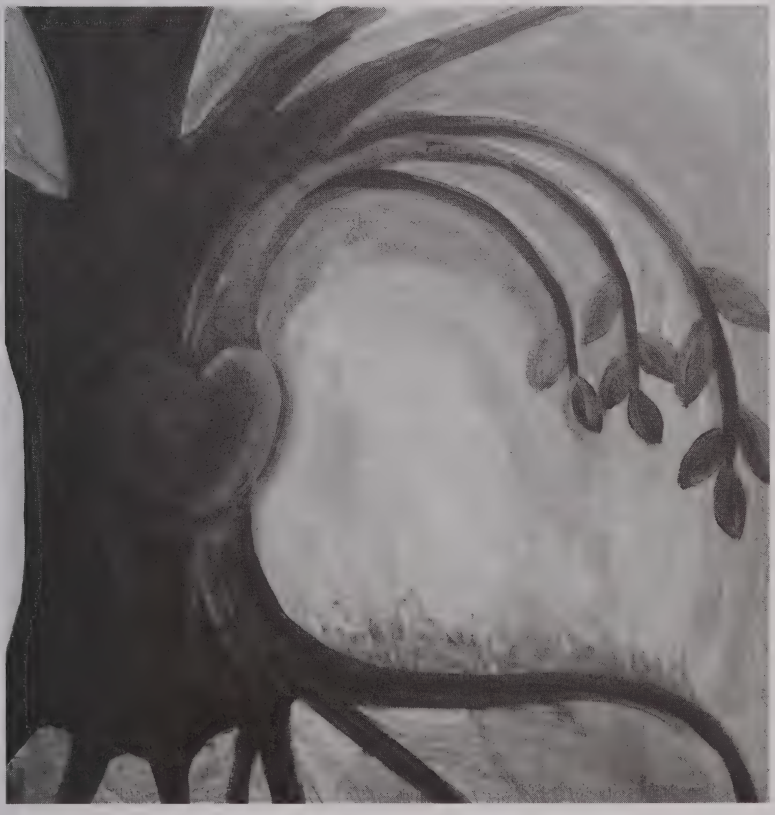
It took me a long time to learn about the love we're called to in the second half of life. But the core of it was shown to me in one look that was exchanged in a courtroom, of all inconceivable places, when I stood face to face with the drunk driver responsible for the deaths of my husband and daughter. I don't understand how one look could move me into a changed relationship with my own life, but it did. In that fierce and beautiful moment—searing and suspended in timelessness as it was—it was apparent that I wasn't here to protect or defend any of the things I was agonizing over. I was momentarily given sight of something else: a single force forever moving in secret rhythm through all our lives. And I knew without question that we're here to realize (however long it takes) that this essence flowing through everything is in fact who we are.

Somehow, in spite of my desperate grief and the way destiny seemed to rise up and impoverish me, in that moment, I saw that the Self we are born to express remained untouched and undisturbed by my dire circumstances. And the wisdom that freed me that day didn't come from the mind, but was itself infinite. It was the divine I had glimpsed in the driver's eyes. I could not have put it into words at the time, but today I see that the second half of life—the movement into the actual embodiment of faith—is not a matter of having more elevated thoughts. It is a different reality. And that glimpse, so generously given, was a break in the thick veil that usually obscures our awareness of what's real.

Former prisoner Gregory David Roberts writes, "The first wall of any prison is the one that surrounds the heart . . . when you escape, when you break out, it's the wall within yourself

that you have to scale first" (Roberts, *Shantaram: A Novel*). The second half of my life began with the scaling of the half-truths I had believed. I became grateful beyond measure that a love of real substance had broken through that day, allowing me to experience a true freedom. Roberts adds, ". . . that freedom is a universe of possibility. And the choice you make, between hating and forgiving, can become the story of your life."

So I set out to learn about the real nature of this journey. I found a Hawaiian proverb: "The branches exist because of the trunk." If the trunk was my heart, then I had choices to make, and the choice between hating and forgiving was just one of them. There were choices about rushing past things rather than living deliberately and consciously. The choice to slow down



©istockphoto.com/h2o_color

and meet my life: to stand before everything that matters; to stand before my suffering—in every instance; to stand, and not turn away.

Okay, so this is grief; I will not run away. This is fear; I will watch how it seduces me. This is confusion; I will notice how I absolve myself of responsibility by allowing confusion to appear powerful. This is the beauty/terror of the human experience; I will accept life and reach beyond these circumstances for a greater knowledge. I asked myself, am I willing to see past the things of which I am so certain? Do I have the courage to question everything?

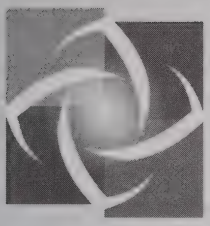
In time, life itself became my great teacher. I saw how I usually approached life with my conclusions, already firm. I didn't take enough time with things. I didn't grant life to others, quite the opposite: I often clung to my own version of someone else's life. This self-reflection was supremely difficult. I saw how strong opinions frequently rushed in to cloud vision. It took great resolve to slow down the speed of my conditioned responses, but being aware of them was the first hurdle. I began to own my own missteps and my experience of life quietly deepened.

I saw that in opening up to what's underneath our circumstances, there is the real possibility of knowing the freedom that is already ours, and allowing its power to change us. I began to walk toward the love I had experienced in that courtroom with my whole life.

Welcome.

Paula D'Arcy is an internationally recognized writer, retreat leader and seminar speaker. She is founder and President of the Red Bird Foundation, www.redbirdfoundation.com, which supports the growth and spiritual development of those in need, and furthers a ministry both to those in prison and those living in disadvantaged cultures. This article first appeared in *Radical Grace*, a publication of the Center for Action and Contemplation and used with permission. www.cacradicalgrace.org

Introducing. . .



Call on FAITH™

Anytime. Anywhere.

Your on-the-go all-video source for inspiration.

The new inspirational all-video smartphone app.

Produced by Odyssey Networks, America's largest multi-faith media coalition.

On iPhone, Blackberry, Android phones, iPad, iTouch and the Sprint Network.

callonfaith.com

odysseynetworks.org

Metta Meditation

TRIME LHAMO

The practice of Metta (Loving-Kindness) Meditation has been used for over 2,500 years in Buddhist practice as a way of creating harmony in difficult situations, relating to the suffering of everyone involved, and cultivating a loving heart. Its goal is to develop a wide and limitless compassion toward oneself and others in word and deed, thought and intention.

To engage in this practice, establish a quiet place where you won't be disturbed. Allot yourself 15-20 minutes. Sit on a meditation cushion or straight-backed chair. Close your eyes. Breathe deeply. Allow your mind to settle. Notice your in-breath and out-breath. Use a simple phrase such as, *Breathing in—I am aware of breathing in; breathing out—I am aware of breathing out.* Once you have quieted your mind and body, notice in yourself any anger, fear, grief, dislike, resentment, rejection, uneasiness, or anxiety. Recognize these feelings are produced by thoughts. Let them float away and dissolve into the atmosphere each time you breathe out.

The practice of Loving Kindness begins with you. Let a sense of warmth, friendship, and gratitude arise in your heart for yourself. Realize that you must be your own best friend.

Repeat the following phrase (The First Thought that Liberates) about ten times:
On the in-breath, *May I enjoy happiness.*
On the out-breath, *And understand the cause of happiness.*

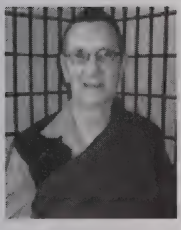
Next, bring to mind a loved one—your child, your partner, your parent, a close friend. Holding that person in your thoughts, recite inwardly the same phrase:
On the in-breath, *May you enjoy happiness.*
On the out-breath, *And understand the cause of happiness.*

Now repeat these phrases for a stranger—the person who is neutral—neither a friend nor an enemy, someone you do not know such as a cab driver, the grocer, someone you pass on the street.

Finally, repeat these phrases for your enemy—someone who has harmed you or with whom you struggle. Bring them to mind and send them these same good thoughts.

You can repeat this practice using other thoughts that liberate:
To develop Compassion:
May I be free from suffering and the cause of suffering.
To develop Sympathetic Joy:
May I never be separated from the great happiness, devoid of suffering.
To develop Equanimity:
May I be free from greed, hatred, and prejudice.

At the end of your practice, send your loving kindness to all beings. Recite the following to yourself:
May all beings enjoy happiness and the cause of happiness.
May all beings be free from suffering and the cause of suffering.
May all beings never be separated from the great happiness, devoid of suffering.
May all beings dwell in equanimity, free from greed, hatred and prejudice. SJ



Prepared by Venerable Bhikshuni Karma Trime Lhamo, American born buddhist nun and teacher for the Princeton Buddhist Meditation Group and former member of Fellowship In Prayer's Board of Trustees.

An Unlikely Alliance

RAIS BHUIYAN & MARK STROMAN

In every age and in response to every tragedy, there are always those who inspire us; whose courage and kindness make us see the goodness of God, of life, of human beings. These men and women are dead set against letting evil have the last word.

Rais Bhuiyan

I was born in Bangladesh and moved to Dallas, Texas mid-2001. I worked alone in a gas station and after 9/11, I felt afraid to be there by myself, afraid there might be some sort of backlash against Muslims and foreigners in this country. On September 21, 2001, my worst fears were confirmed when Mark Stroman came into the store, pointed a gun directly at my face and asked, "Where are you from?" I had barely finished saying, "Excuse me?" when he shot me with a double-barrel shotgun from less than five feet away. Mark intended to kill me. However, I lived. After several years of medical treatment the doctor has been able to save my eye but my vision is gone and I still carry more than thirty-five pellets in my face. Mark Stroman left two other victims as well—Wagar Hassan Choudhry who was murdered on September 15th and Vasudev Patel, a gentleman from India, who was murdered on October 4th. Mark Stroman was arrested on the 5th of October. In his own statement, he described himself as a patriot who wanted to do the right thing and kill some Muslims in this country to take revenge. He did not represent the American people, he did not represent this country. He was an individual who committed these heinous crimes out of ignorance and anger. Mark Stroman was convicted and sentenced to death for killing Mr. Patel. Did I have to respond to what Mark did to me with violence? No! I decided that perhaps I could show mercy, forgiveness, love and peace. Perhaps, my response could bring something good to society.

Mark Stroman

My name is Mark Stroman and I am currently awaiting execution in the modernized "Dungeon of Death" that most call Texas Death Row. And yes, it is a nightmare come to life. Words can't express my true feelings about this hellish place—oppressed confinement, chained and shackled like an animal, surrounded by the smell of death day in and day out. It is almost more than I can stand. Like I said, it's a nightmare come to life. I won't hide the truth. I am not an innocent man and I am not asking you to feel sorry for me. I am, however, a human being who made some terrible mistakes, fueled by love and loss, grief and anger. Believe me, I am paying for it every single waking minute of every day and it haunts me in my sleep as well. On September 11, 2001, I lost my sister in the attacks on the World Trade Center. I remember sitting at home watching that nightmare unfold on TV. Knowing she was on the top floors of the North Tower, let's just say that I could not think clearly after that. And I am sorry I made innocent people pay for my rage. I destroyed my victims' families, as well as my own. I am the father of four awesome kids, three girls and one boy—and I can't stand the thought of anyone harming or abusing them. Out of pure anger and stupidity, I did some very harmful things to some men from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia—and now I sit on death row awaiting execution. By no means am I proud of what I have done but since I have been on death row, I have watched many men walk their final walk and it has made me value life more than ever. I see things more clearly now—Life is precious and full of surprises. Blessed are the merciful.

Rais Bhuiyan

The incident with Mark Stroman changed my entire life. Although my sight is gone, I have a new vision in my heart. I forgave Mark right away. I never hated Mark Stroman, I've always believed he

didn't know what was the right thing to do. My Islamic faith teaches me that forgiveness is the best policy. Islam is not about hate and killing. Islam teaches that saving one human life is like saving all mankind. I made a promise on my death bed in 2001 that if God gave me back my life, I would dedicate it to saving others. I renewed that promise when I went on my pilgrimage to Mecca in 2009. I felt like I was a different person, that my heart was more open than ever before. I felt that perhaps I was forgiven all the sins I committed in my life. It was a big turning point. I felt more peace, more compassion than ever before. That was when I started the campaign to save Mark Stroman's life. I built a website called "World Without Hate" (www.worldwithouthate.org). I wanted people to know his execution would not stop hate crimes, it would simply take another human life. If Mark had been given a chance, he might have become a spokesperson, raising awareness of hate crimes. If he could have touched only one life, educated one person not to follow his path, he would have been a success.

©istockphoto.com/marekuliasz

Mark's attorney informed me that when Mark heard about my campaign he burst into tears. He couldn't believe that the person who had every reason to hate him was the one who started a campaign to save his life. I received a letter from Mark Stroman in which he said while he was growing up he had been taught hate and violence by his stepfather. He said while he had been behind bars for nine years he had overcome many past hurts and learned behaviors and he was still working to overcome the rest. I try to remind people about things like this—especially those in power—to say "Look, this guy has changed, give him a chance. He's not the cold-blooded murderer

that he was ten years ago." Since September 11, 2001, we have been living in a world full of fear—fear of the unknown based on what happened that day, but we cannot live in the past, we must move on. My goal is to create some positive consequence from a negative experience. Let's end the cycle of hate and violence. Let's move forward.

Before Mark was put to death he was really calm; he was at peace. One of his last messages was that hate going on everywhere in this world has to come to an end. I cried. I couldn't believe we were losing yet another human life. Mark was put to death on July 20, 2011, around 8:30 p.m.

Mark Stroman

July 20, 2011 3:54 a.m.
Execution Day

Welcome to My Nightmare: Tales From A Dead Man
With Grace, Dignity, Pride, Regrets, Peace, Forgiveness, Always

Well, the big day has arrived and I'm on my feet doing the morning rituals and trying to determine what I'm actually feeling. The day of my death is here and I've been overwhelmed with total peace. The Spirit flows through these Texas veins of mine—Red, White, & Blue—still unbroken and anxious to get this show on the road for some reason. Yesterday I had another set of awesome all day visits and I will say that the emotions were ever present. The tears flowed freely, tears of joy and happiness, the tears of real love flowed between us all. Yesterday I had my lifelong friends Ben & Liz show up, what a blessing they are. And if you both are reading this it's been an honor and I love y'all. Ilan, Connie, Mark, and Laura, you know what's inside me and I'm proud of you all. Today the events will be somewhat different; I will have my last set of visits until 12:00 noon. That's when the State officials must complete their end of the deal and transport me to Huntsville, Texas. It will be

the first time I've left this compound since my arrival in 2002. I'm sure that forty-five minute drive is gonna be an amazing event for me. My only thoughts will be on the visitors I've just left, surely this last set of good-byes will draw out the innermost human feelings we possess. Human nature at its finest. Amongst a world full of hate the power of love and friendship will prevail and I'm proud as ever to have had the chance in this life to see both sides of the coin. Last night's mail call was another unreal event, the mass amount of mail I have received is overwhelming, the number of letters and email messages kept me up most of the night reading and thinking and feeling every bit of this journey of life. From Iran to Brazil and almost every other country in the world people have responded with words of love and support. Every race of mankind, several types of faith and religious beliefs have entered into my zone of death. The one message that all of these different people are saying is awesome and speaks to the power of the story of forgiveness, worldwide peace and how this story of death can in some way change the views of the reader. That's powerful, folks. It's now 4:29 a.m., third cup of coffee is slowly inching its way down me, and the radio is playing some of my favorite tunes and I'm 100% content and loving every moment of this. I've been a morning person my whole life, it's the best part of the day and a time when my thoughts belong to me. It's extremely strange to look at the clock on the radio and realize that I must complete this blog before the hour of 5:00 am rolls around, it shall be the final piece of mail I send out, the final entry and a conclusion to the *Execution Chronicles*. This nightmare has turned into something of great power and beauty. To each and every one of you; friends, loved ones and the many unknowns who have just started looking at these blogs, remember these wise words, from all this we may learn that there are two races of men in this world but only these two, the race of the decent man and the race of the indecent man.

Both are found everywhere; they penetrate into all groups of society. With all that said let me say farewell to all of you, and should I be granted a Stay and handed back a chance at life, I will return with a story that will be even more powerful. Still Unbroken—Texas Loud & Texas Proud—True American, Mark Stroman

Excerpted and adapted with permission from:
Execution Chronicles www.executionchronicles.org
Odyssey Networks www.odysseynetworks.com

A Prayer for Justice

HELEN PREJEAN

God of Compassion

You let your rain fall on the just and the unjust.
Expand and deepen our hearts
so that we may love as You love,
even those among us
who have caused the greatest pain by taking life.
For there is in our land a great cry for vengeance
as we fill up death row and kill the killers
in the name of justice, in the name of peace.
Jesus, our brother,
you suffered execution at the hands of the state
but you did not let hatred overcome you
Help us to reach out to victims of violence
so that our enduring love may help them heal.
Holy Spirit of God,
You strengthen us in the struggle for justice,
Help us to work tirelessly
for the abolition of state-sanctioned death
and to renew our society in its very heart
so that violence will be no more.

Amen

Sr. Helen Prejean is a member of the congregation of Saint Joseph. She has become a leading American advocate for the abolition of the death penalty.

Meditative Prayer

MICHAL MAHGEREFTEH

when I close my eyes and speak in thoughts
to You who permits David's string to light
my endless nights, I smile, smile to the dread
that refuses to be explained even in repetitions
of three, and when You say, *let it be . . . and there*
it was . . . I brook no arguments, and in a seamless
unity of breath pronounce my reply, each word
carefully, *may it be . . . as you wish*, with a smile

Michal Mahgerefteh is an award-winning poet and artist from Israel, now living in VA. She is editor of *Poetica Magazine, Contemporary Jewish Writing and Art.* In 2011, Michal published two chapbook collections, *Sipping Memories: A Poetic Journal to Morocco* and *What's Left Behind.* www.michalmahgerefteh.com

©istockphoto.com/Toltek

Soften My Heart

CHARLENE HERTZ DYBEDOCK

Soften my heart, Lord, before I take leave.
I wouldn't want to forsake forgiveness.
So many lessons learned would go to waste
If I ran out of time before I let go of love withheld.

Those of us desperate for loving parents
Have had to parent our selves,
Resenting past hurts even as
We stand witness to their final days.

If fortunate we find the child inside;
Learn they too are creatures reflecting
Their own parents' failings. It's not too late.
Forgiving those already gone still heals the heart.

So I think of my friend, heart failing at its physical task;
Does he feel it failing at the harder chores?
I would hate to think, if that were me
That I had failed to forgive sufficiently.

Soften my heart, Lord, before I take leave.

Charlene Hertz Dybedock has gained life experience in both the public and private sector. Charlene has a BA in English, an MBA and is a Certified Organizational consultant. Before joining her husband in the rental business, she was a college administrator for fifteen years.

Mindfulness Version of the Lord's Prayer

BRIAN BRANDSMEIER

Holy Presence, your name is truly sacred. May your vision for the world be realized, and may your will be done in our lives as it is in heaven. Provide us with the goodness of food and remind us to enjoy it mindfully. Forgive us for the times that we have rushed through life, not noticing the small miracles around us. And please forgive those who haven't had enough time to notice us. Lead us all into abundant life in the here-and-now of our lives, and lead us away from the busyness that makes us live too far in the past or future. For the here-and-now Kin-dom, here-and-now power, and here-and-now glory are yours this moment and forever. Amen!

Brian Brandsmeier is a clergyperson, songwriter, and blogger in Iowa City, IA. He graduated from Luther College and Eden Theological Seminary. Brian likes to write prayers and liturgies that are creative, relevant and contextual. He also enjoys spending time with his newborn son, Axel.

Being Compassionate Animals

WALTER LONG

Biology and culture have hard wired us for both revenge and forgiveness (McCullough, *Beyond Revenge: The Evolution of the Forgiveness Instinct*; Beck, MD, *Prisoners of Hate: The Cognitive Basis of Anger, Hostility, and Violence*). Surely just because revenge seems to come naturally for us does not mean that *violence* is intrinsic to our nature or to the divine. Key to human survival will be our ability to train ourselves to recognize that gross insults (such as a murder in our community), which stimulate our retributive survival instinct, can be answered and ameliorated in caring communities through legal systems adequate to protect our dignity—systems composed of adequate laws, adequate enforcement of those laws and adequate means for restoration of those who have suffered indignities and those who have committed them.

Key also for our survival will be the development among ourselves of the wisdom that we are a biological species. We live as vulnerable mammals bound within the uncertain dimensions of space and time. We are in profound need of verbal communication, emotional contact, touch and warmth from others in our species. Without that human connection, we go into severe distress (Lewis, Amini, and Lannon, *A General Theory of Love*). We are not, in essence, the isolated individuals imagined in retributive models, molded as we are by biology, environment and our interactions with others. On subconscious levels, our bodies always are reciprocally regulated by those of others—affecting our "hormone levels, cardiovascular function, sleep rhythms, immune function, and more"(Lewis, Amini, and Lannon). Science is confirming that, no matter our social station, we are all bound up inextricably in each other's neurobiology. Ultimately, our physical and emotional quality of

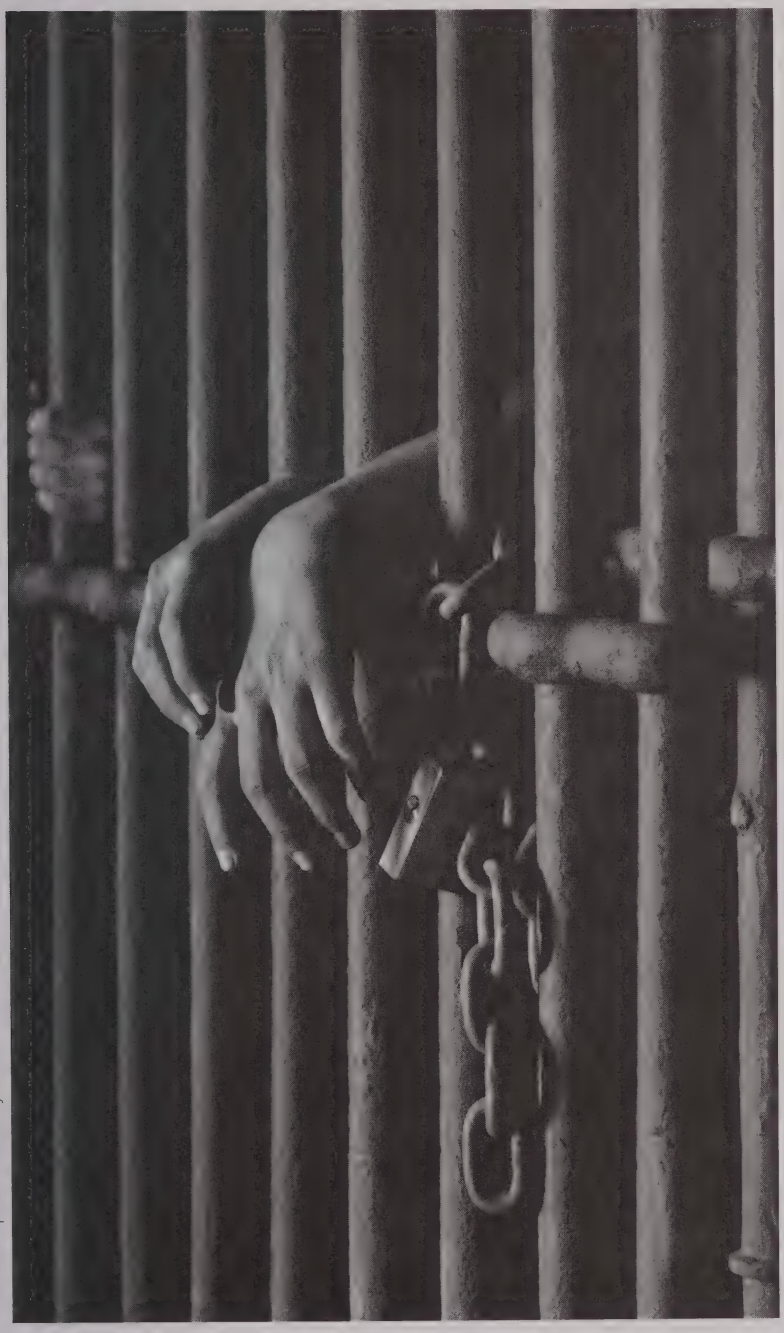
life rises or falls with that of our neighbors *and* our enemies.

What deeply affects you affects me (or us) and vice versa. A clear example is the neurobiological effects of the attack on the World Trade Center (and our country's retributive response) upon ourselves and the citizens of the world (Bloom, "Neither Liberty Nor Safety" from *Psychotherapy and Politics International*). Those actions continue to resonate throughout the legal, practical and emotional experiences of human beings in many places. Recognizing our inter-connectedness and mutual vulnerability as a species, we should create and sustain social systems that provide the greatest potential for the respect of human dignity and, consequently, the least potential for human emotional trauma.

> We need to recognize our interconnectedness and mutual vulnerability as a species.

My home state Texas has done the opposite up to now. For example, when the Texas legislature reinstated the death penalty in 1973, the lawmakers conducted no inquiry whatsoever into the traumatic effects that the death penalty had (and would have) on people living in Texas. During House floor debate immediately before the bill's passage, the author of the legislation defended his bill by quoting Genesis and other parts of the Torah, asserting that the murderer's shed blood always would cleanse the land of the defilement caused by the crime. He was joined by other representatives arguing from similar passages, which finally prompted one of the opponents to stand and ask the house speaker if he was aware that the proponents, "being . . . Baptist, only quote[d] Mosaic law?" (Floor debate, Texas House of Representatives, House Bill 200, May 10, 1973, 63rd Legislature).

The death penalty in Texas is only one of many indications



©istockphoto.com/Syldavia

of a culture that is "trauma organized." Instead of acting in proactive ways to reduce trauma, Texas government tends to be reactive, addressing traumatic situations with trauma-inducing solutions (Bloom and Reichert, *Bearing Witness: Violence and Collective Responsibility*). Texas's punitive criminal justice system, informed by a culture of excessive individualism and Christian fundamentalism, feeds a cycle of violence that begins with a neglect of human needs across the board. Texas is at the bottom of the list of states in providing for the necessities of children through such services as health care, mental health care, prenatal care, pre-school programs, child care, and education. Because of its legislative priorities, Texas fails to solve its huge problems with school dropout rates, teen pregnancy and juvenile crime. It then reacts punitively to these and other problems, spending three times as much money to house each state prisoner as it does to support each school student (National Education Association, *Ranking and Estimates: A Report of School Statistics Update*).

On a societal level, we need to learn to resist the temptation to react with instinctive retribution and then rationalize our harsh actions with a "righteousness behind the suffering." We need to listen deeply to human needs, understanding that vengeance responds to outrages committed against dignity. The retributive urge is natural, perhaps innate. But we must mindfully endeavor to prevent it from becoming violent policy. In part that means aggressively pursuing the elimination of poverty, inadequate education, inadequate health care, and inadequate provision of treatment and support for persons traumatized by violence, which are themselves outrages against dignity.

I labor under the impression that my religion is a cause of deep suffering as it nurtures America's last bastion of capital punishment. Over the years, this impression has challenged my ability to find spiritual refuge from the emotional trauma I have incurred in my job. The shame it induces has caused me

to ask whether, indeed, there is anything worth retaining in my religion. Throughout, however, I have prayed the Lord's Prayer, and as I have reflected on that experience, I have realized that the prayer has helped me to keep from coming apart at the seams. It has helped me retain some equanimity. For the most part, I have not become lost in anger or despair and, when faced with circumstances that have seemed like crucifixions, I have kept moving. Movement is critical. The lightness of forgiveness is essential, in part because there is no authentic sense making of an execution. At the same time that I can report some resiliency in trying to follow Jesus's strategy, I confess that I live in fear. With Texas's incessant killing, I am triggered almost daily to recall past execution traumas.

Fearless compassion speaks to the bestial tendencies within all of us on behalf of dignity—our own, our neighbor's, our enemy's dignity. Refuge in Jesus is not a place or a state; it is not necessarily survival in the ordinary or supernatural senses. It is *doing*, caring movement among others undergirded by pursuit of forgiveness at every turn. It is, thus, living in the kingdom. As Jesus said in the parable of the Good Samaritan, it is *being mercy*. In principle, the distance between neighbor and enemy has been dissolved. In fact, each act of self-forgiveness and forgiveness of others is a small resurrection—a revivifying contact with others—and a source of hope for a less violent, more just future.

Walter Long is a member of the Friends Meeting of Austin, TX. As a criminal defense attorney, he has represented Texas Death Row inmates in state and federal habeas corpus appeals. He is founder of the Texas After Violence Project.
Excerpted from *An Art of Small Resurrections: Serving the Texas Death Chamber* © 2010 Pendle Hill Publications and used with permission. www.pendlehill.com

Dialogue Behind Closed Walls

FRANCISCO WILLS

With a customary prayer, Rabbi Adam began the biweekly session of Catholic Bible Study. In silence, Catholic, Jewish and Protestant attendees bowed their heads and prayed in the manner of their own tradition. Without any need to discuss or agree on the proper closing for prayer, a unison "Amen" sufficed.

The inter-faith gathering assumed the form of an Old Testament study, but in reality, the meeting bears witness to the transformative power of shared experiences, knowledge and skills.

This unlikely gathering is the result of an extraordinary opportunity to contemplate the faith journey of people of different faith systems, to learn from each other and to grow together as human beings. The group meets at a maximum security prison in the State of New Jersey. The participants, with the exception of the Catholic chaplain, a Dominican sister, who facilitates the encounter, are all imprisoned and serving lengthy sentences. Yet, hope in the redemptive power of faith drives them towards understanding, growth and the true freedom exercised by the opportunity to get to know those who believe differently. There are no strangers among them.

The particular spirit of fellowship and love for one another is universally embraced by different faith traditions and gains special relevance amidst suffering and deprivation.

In Christian scripture, the parable of the Good Samaritan encourages the faithful to recognize the humanity of the other, and to be, unconditionally, of service to any person that requires compassion (Luke 10:29-37). The perspective of Jewish tradition and law regarding the dignity of the "stranger" is exemplified in the following story in *The Torah, A Modern Commentary* by

Gunther Plaut, he writes:

> The wife of a rabbi prepared to lodge a complaint against her maid. The rabbi accompanied his wife to the magistrate. "Was this not beneath his dignity?" she asked. His answer: "No, I intend to represent the maid who, being 'our' stranger, needs someone to take her part so that justice will be done."

The Qur'an (translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali) also makes a compelling case for doing good to others, and seriously encourages Muslims to follow an Islamic version of the Golden Rule:

> Serve God . . . and do good—to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbors who are near, neighbors who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet).

Bridges across faith traditions are built in many different ways. Some choose the scholarly world of academe as the public arena where doctrinal and theological discussion can be studied; others meet to offer different expressions of prayer and faith under one roof, such as the 1986 summit of religious leaders in Assisi, Italy. Most often, however, it is in the small realm of community relations, such as this particular meeting in prison, that the faithful of many traditions come together to act on a common problem, help one another with a shared skill, or simply listen to the humanity of the other people in the best hope of understanding what it is to be human, and what the other dreams about.

The importance of learning what the other person stands for cannot be overestimated. The truth is that human beings do not handle the "other" very well, and that mismanagement of cultural and religious differences usually leads to fear, and at time, sadly, to mutual hatred. In a corrections environment, such efforts in dialogue are immensely relevant because they contribute to the peace and security of the institution, and they

help to build relationships that transcend race, religion and cultures.

To learn about the moral scaffolding of other faith traditions facilitates common ground for understanding. The concept of natural law is behind this particular exercise:

> The natural law expresses the original moral sense which enables men to discern by reason the good and the evil, the truth and the lie (*Catechism of the Catholic Church).*

Inter-faith sharing is a positive activity, which enhances the moral formation of the individual's conscience and expands the necessary foundations for a broader understanding of different traditions and cultures. The law is called "natural" precisely because it appeals to reason, a natural component and one of the defining aspects of humanity.

It is not easy to define how natural law acts and how it is ingrained in the fabric of life, reason and social living. However, this natural wisdom seems to provide a space for the meeting of varied philosophical and religious systems. Again, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states:

> Application of the natural law varies greatly; it can demand reflection that takes account of various conditions of life according to places, times and circumstances. Nevertheless, in the diversity of cultures, the natural law remains as a rule that binds men [and women] among themselves and imposes on them, beyond the inevitable differences, common principles.

It is in building a network of relationships across religions and cultures that society transcends the egocentric trends of misdirected zeal. The zealous care of a particular structure of beliefs requires an open approach to dialogue within an evolving social environment. Pope John Paul II, writes in an encyclical letter, *Veritatas Splendor*:

> The faithful should live in the closest contact with

others of their time, and should work for a perfect understanding of their modes of thought and feelings as expressed in their culture.

All steps toward understanding the intrinsic value of all human beings are powerful tools for raising awareness about contemporary moral challenges. Small inter-faith meetings are viable in any given community and should be encouraged as the means for strengthening social relationships, peace and harmony across cultures and religions.

To have a favorable *a priori* towards other faith journeys allows a heightened sense of the unique ways in which humanity may seek to communicate with God and others.

This time, the dialogue began within the walls of a prison, but it surely does not need to end there. SJ

Fancisco Wills is a member of the Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic. He holds a BA in Theology and is currently pursuing graduate studies in Theology. His writing has appeared in *Carmelite Digest* and *e-Lumen*. His interests are interfaith dialogue, inclusivity in the Church and Carmelite spirituality. He writes from a prison cell in New Jersey.

Does No One Care?

CAROLYN FOOTE EDELMANN

"All that it takes for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing."
~Edmund Burke

Today at sunrise, walking along the Delaware & Raritan Canal State Park, viewing anew it's recent destruction, I tried to comprehend how someone would need to inflict damage upon this stretch of history, this enclave of pristine nature. Like others who viewed the destruction created by vandals, I felt outrage.

Who, exactly, was the intended victim here? Nature, the canal, the State Park, the picnic tables, the families who love to gather here? All of the above?

As I strode the towpath these words sounded in my mind and heart: TRAVESTY, TRAGEDY, DESTRUCTION, DESOLATION, PROFANATION.

The violence that made it possible to shatter and pry hefty wood from the concrete picnic tables is shocking. Who has such rage? Who and what caused it? Who can sustain the furious violence it would take to move from table to table, bench to bench, wrenching each one apart, flinging the wood in different directions?

Black Elk, one of our Native American ancestors, proclaimed, "We are all connected." We need to face this truth. The act of violence in the park, like all acts of violence, is not separate, removed from the actions of the rest of us. It is not the malady of the **perpetrator** alone—it is ours as well. Our park is wounded—and with it, our human nature.

Later, on the trail in the half-light, I came upon artists Charles and Lucy McVicker, who had been painting all week *en plein air* at D&R Greenway for an upcoming art exhibit. The towpath's destruction was the polar opposite of the Greenway's restored meadow—awash in purple love grass, piqued by daisies, bounded by towering conifers. We commiserated with

© carolynfooteedelman

Vandals' Revenge—Battered Picnic Tables, Mapleton Entry to D&R Canal State Park

one another, conscious that we didn't fully understand what had led to the violence. It seemed so futile . . . but we have to be willing to face reality: To the person who did this, the destruction had meaning.

In reflecting upon what happened along the towpath and every act of violence, I am haunted by this phrase taken from the last scene of *Death of a Salesman*: "ATTENTION MUST BE PAID."

There is some wisdom to be drawn from Shakespeare's MacBeth: "If we screw our courage to the sticking place, we'll not fail" SJ

Carolyn Foote Edelmann reflects on the event which took place last July, when vandals destroyed memorial benches, picnic tables and information displays along The Delaware & Raritan Canal State Park, a 70-mile National Recreation Trail in NJ, This reflection is a call to action for all of us.

The Empowerment Ceremony

JARVIS JAY MASTERS

When I was offered the chance to receive a spiritual empowerment by a Buddhist Tibetan Lama, the first feeling I remember was one of being undeserving. Then came fear at the thought of this ceremony being done where I was, in a violent state prison—San Quentin.

I was only a beginner in Buddhism. Through corresponding with people on the outside I had learned how to practice Buddhist meditation. It was, for me, a quiet practice that I kept to myself. To the extent that I could, I kept it secret from my fellow prisoners and the prison guards.

After eight years of incarceration, I felt a real fear of calling myself a Buddhist and of being seen by my fellow prisoners in a lotus position, praying or meditating. I was especially afraid of being seen receiving an empowerment. While my heart cherished this opportunity, other voices inside me questioned the ceremony. Could this be just a phase that I was going through? Would I later betray myself and the sacredness of this empowerment? Was I a Buddhist? Would I take vows that would eventually call upon me to sacrifice my life? How would I resist all the violence of the prison?

In prison, no one believes that conversion to religion is real. Most prisoners think that anyone who catches a sudden belief in a religion is playing a game or conning their way out of the system.

I had spent almost a year overcoming these doubts, one by one, through my practice and through the teachings of Chagdud Tulku Rinpoche, the Lama from whom I would receive my empowerment. Yet somehow they had all reappeared on the morning of the ceremony. Sitting on the floor of my cell trying to meditate, I was scared. The prison echoed the voices of

hundreds of prisoners, cursing and arguing all at once.

I just sat still, repeating the prayer of the Red Tara. "Illustrious Tara, please be aware of me, remove my obstacles and quickly grant my excellent aspirations." With each repetition I would search within my Tara prayer for the divine strength to dispel all my worries, to prepare me to openly accept my empowerment, to help me embrace this day of my first proclamation of Buddhism. But despite this prayer, I wanted to keep my practice secret, so it would remain pure in my heart when I sat in meditation. I wanted to protect the most tranquil hour of my prison life.

I had only met the Rinpoche once before. I had been deeply touched by that first unexpected visit of his to San Quentin to see me. The rules of the prison allowed us to speak only by phone in a small visiting booth, through a glass window. During the visit, I had felt the warmth in the Rinpoche's heart just by looking at him, and a trust in the Rinpoche's words. I hoped that through his showing me how to practice in prison, I would one day be able to openly receive my empowerment.

Now I felt fortunate to be sitting on the floor of my cell awaiting this opportunity. I remembered what someone had said to me long ago: "All you need is a pure heart. It's what's in your heart that counts the most. Quietly listen for it." This is what I was doing.

It was noon on the day of the ceremony when my name was called out. A guard handcuffed me and escorted me to the visiting building of the prison. I repeated to myself the prayer of Tara as I went, right up to the moment my eyes met the Rinpoche's, for the second time in my life.

I sat down facing the Rinpoche with a glass window between us. With him was Tsering, another one of his close students, who was there to translate for him. Melody, a friend and a Buddhist herself, was also there to celebrate this experience with me. We greeted each other warmly and joyfully as other prisoners' visitors looked on.

I picked up the phone. Tsering already held the phone on their side of the booth. With a bright loving smile on her face, she asked how I was doing. I smiled back and assured all of them that I was doing fine. We were all smiling. Tsering then turned to Lama Rinpoche to receive his words.

She looked back at me. "The Rinpoche is asking if your mind is clear."

"Yes," I replied.

* * * * * * * *

Empowerment Ceremony, transcribed and excerpted by Melody Ermachild.

Rinpoche: It doesn't matter we can't touch. The power of the ceremony is in your hearing the words. I ask you to look at things in a very broad way. Don't blame others for your difficulties. . . . You'll notice that an angry prisoner is really sad because he is making bad karma. All of that is behind you now. From right now, go forward. Before all beings make a promise: I won't be angry, I won't hurt anyone with my actions. That's my priority every day, even if it costs my life. If you keep this promise you don't create any more future unhappiness for yourself. In your own words compose your promise and say it three times, before God, Angels, Buddhism, and everyone. This provides for your safety. Like if you don't drink poison you don't get a bellyache . . . .

Jarvis: From this day forward I will not hurt or harm other people even if it costs my life.

Rinpoche: The second vow: From this day forward I will try to end the suffering of all human beings and other beings.... We relate to our bodies since babyhood as solid. This is part of our karma, but not the whole truth. The empowerment changes our minds about our bodies. Now it is alive—now it is dead and gone. There is space in-between the molecules. That's the body too. Vast openness, vast emptiness. There is continuity between the body and dream; the body and death and rebirth. Underneath there is sameness. Emptiness is the basis for

everything—in it is wisdom, which doesn't get born and die but is forever true. Like the sky. . . we label words good or bad, but it's all just wind on our vocal chords. The sound of the sky is the sound of emptiness. All sound is an expression of emptiness and so is your body. All are one—a ray of sunlight is part of the fun.

If it's hard to understand, think about dreaming. This life is only a dream . . . . Everything is in how I think of it. For example, a prison—you can think it's bad, but a person who lives in a beautiful house kills himself. Everyone sits somewhere, whether beautiful or miserable . . . . Hell is not elsewhere. Hell is one's own nightmare—hell is the result of hatred within one. There are two ways to change the mind. One is to think, think, think. One is to let go of thinking and just settle. The essence of all lives on earth is the same. They all taste the same. The concepts of the mind are what give us the idea that some lives are miserable and others are wonderful. Like movies, which are really only light on cellophane. Realize all this is really the movie of your mind. Try to understand that the nature of our body is deathless and your nature is true, faultless, and pure. The essence of mind is open, present. Thoughts are just firings of your brain. Like this window glass—if you look at it you won't see anything. If you look at thoughts you won't see perfection.

Jarvis: Helping others could cost me my life today or tomorrow in here. Can I qualify my vow by common sense? Can I use my intelligence not to cause my own death?

Rinpoche: If you help one person today and it costs your life, that's only one person. But if you train your mind to help the best way, you'll help many—100, 1000, countless people. There are three ways to be: harmless, helpful, pure. Eventually you will understand your own pure nature. Before you understand it you will feel heaven and hell. It's like being surrounded by 100 mirrors—if we are dirty and ugly we will see others that way; if we are beautiful others will be also. It's all a function of mind. The way to practice is to see everyone as pure whether they hurt or help you—even animals, the guards, see

their perfection. Hear every sound as perfection, as Tara talking. Everyone who is born will die . . . . Every moment is a chance to be harmless, pure and helpful. Tara: you are her, completely perfect. . . . .

At the end of every day confess your bad thoughts and actions and recommit yourself. Every time you do something good, instantly give it all away. Every mistake—confess it, let it go. It's like swimming, just keep going.

Jarvis: I feel pure when I am with you, but it's easy to forget.

Rinpoche: Ask for support from Tara . . . . From Tara come blessings. From her body, liquid and light pour into you. She is with you, right over your head. She washes you, cleanses you, fills you with bliss. . .

Jarvis: [asks about a monk he saw on television who immolated himself because of the Gulf War.] What does it mean?

Rinpoche: He was showing his love, to stop war. For him it was good. For you it might not be—you might not be ready. His body to him is like a suit of clothes. We are not all like that.

Today as you've made these promises, you've become like family to us. We'll help you. You're in our prayers always. We'll always think of you.

Jarvis: I really feel that. Thank you, Rinpoche.

* * * * * * * *

Our visit lasted close to two hours. After the ceremony ended, it became very difficult to hear on my side of the phone. There was a tremendous amount of conversation going on around me. All those other inmates speaking through a chain of phones to their visitors made me struggle to hear the voice of my own visitor. "Wow," I wondered, "was it this loud during all those minutes of my empowerment?" It felt as though I had just taken ear plugs out of my ears—as though I had just re-entered the door of prison reality again.

At the end of my visit, I spoke to Melody, who had been sitting close to the window all during the empowerment

ceremony. I thanked her for being there and asked her to thank the Rinpoche and Tsering later for all the blessing they had brought to me. I told her that I had already done this, but had stopped short of speaking fully because I felt tears of gratitude in my eyes, and didn't want to be seen crying. Melody understood and said she would. She hung up the phone and departed, waving goodbye with the Rinpoche and Tsering. I waved back.

As I waited for my escort to take me back to my housing unit, an inmate called over to me and asked if I was a practicing Buddhist. I paused. Just as I began to answer, a prison guard came and stood between the inmate and me to listen in. When I looked at this guard, his eyes wandered away. "Sure I am," I said to the prisoner. "Aren't we all, in some way or another?" "Life," I said as I looked at the guard, "Life, I think, may just put a piece of Buddha in us all."

The guard turned to me with a surprisingly nice smile, and then walked off. I was amazed! I turned to the window where the Rinpoche's chair still was, and felt a powerful sense that he was still there. I bowed three bows to the empty chair.

Jarvis is the author of two books, *Finding Freedom: Writings from Death Row* and *That Bird has my Wings: The Autobiography of an Innocent Man on Death Row.* To read about his background, why he was sentenced to death row and his current appeal status visit www.freejarvis.org. Transcribed by Melody Ermachild: see bio page 64.

Presence

GARETH DICKER

When frothing tides of daily life sink low
And silence from a night sky lifts the moon,
I open wide and true my fragile soul
And hold my heart awake to wait for You—
For broken beats a breast so full of sin,
Whose burden bends this frail and fruitless spine;
Let none but Spirit sound sways soft within
If blessed at all am I by Your design.

Gareth Dicker is an undergraduate at McGill University studying mechanical engineering.

Nightingale

SUSAN LANDON

It was a winter spent
in blizzards and snowdrifts
endlessly tunneling toward the light,
then slogging one day through slush
almost too heavy to toss over drifts.

I soon had company, a few birds
warbling off key in the neighboring pine.
Cacophony, true, but company.
Then from up high came a trilling,
a proud, beautiful song.

Susan Landon is committed to a spiritual journey which is centered in respect for the natural world. Her poetry has appeared in *Avocet: A Journal of Nature Poems, the Aurorean, Friends Journal, Comfort Prayers* and *Wedding Blessings.*

© istockphoto.com/jplank1807

Questions

HELEN PADWAY

Do you feel like Pygmalion?
In love with your creations
ignoring the chips and the faulty
veins in the marble.

Combined there are many of you
teaching a path to wisdom.
Your chorus of different notes blend
into harmony. Teach us to open our ears.

Ancient sages spoke of seven
just men in each generation
do they renew your patience?
Is it hope that makes you persist?

Each year, each millennium you smile
and forgive. Why?

Helen Padway writes in Glendale, WI. She is published in regional and national journals. She truly believes that poetry can both ask and sometimes answer cosmic questions.

Burnt Offerings

MATTHEW HOLDER

There is mercy with true justice;
Despite the plea, sentence passes.
I fight for life, but You to kill;
Prevail against me and deliver.

A double mind of death and life,
Movement and constraint opposed.
I foam and spit, bleed and gnash;
Wounded, hoping for slaughter.

My flesh on the altar consumed;
With the Spirit of Christ ignited.
Still and dry and naked bones,
Clothed with flame and burning forever.

Matthew Holder is a member of the Briarwood Presbyterian Church. He enjoys reading theological books, especially by Martin Luther, Augustine, and John Calvin. Matthew also enjoys martial arts.

And What About the Victim?

TOM KEEVEY

In the journey through life we have known friends, relatives and perhaps ourselves who have been attacked, beaten and stripped of dignity and left for dead. Important people pass by until the "good Samaritan" comes to the rescue. This reference to the New Testament parable is also a metaphor of what has taken place in the history of those who have been victims of crime. Not too long ago police ignored victims in order to read perpetrators their rights; prosecutors were careful that a Miranda warning had been done. Except for testifying in court or being used as another piece of evidence, there was very little attention paid to victims of crime.

Take the case of parents in North Jersey whose son had been murdered and were told to sit outside the courtroom on a park bench until called to testify lest they unduly influence the jury. Yet the defendant's family and friends peopled the same courtroom. And what about the victims of rape who were admonished for the clothes they wore or the places they frequented? Or domestic violence victims whose bruises were not immediately evident and so were ignored while the guilty spouse received a polite warning or clergy who advised such victims to "put up with it" because it was their duty to remain in that relationship?

Our justice system has been shaped by the Bill of Rights in the US Constitution because we were the so-called defendants in our struggle against the British King. The Bill of Rights afforded protections against an intrusive and unjust government. While these rights and subsequent Miranda Rights protected those accused of crime, there was nothing regarding the

rights of victims. And there is still nothing today in our federal constitution.

The 1970s saw the appearance of the 'good Samaritan' in the form of those who saw the need to state clearly the rights of those who had been ignored or passed by in the criminal justice system just as, at the same time, there was a rise in consciousness about civil rights, women's rights, children's rights, environmental rights. Libraries were filled with law books interpreting criminal law but little if anything regarding the victim; law schools followed suite in their approach to criminal law. It was President Regan in 1982 who established a Task Force on Victims of Crime which concluded that the way we treat victims (in this country) is a national disgrace.

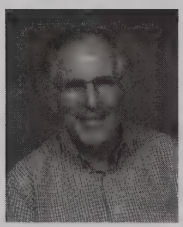
With this impetus a whole system has developed around the rights and need of victims of crime and every state has a victims bill of rights, provisions for compensation for injury, financial loss and need for psychological counseling. Offices have been established with a staff to assist, counsel, inform and accompany victims through every stage (which can be quite confusing) of the criminal justice system. And finally many states including New Jersey have passed a constitutional amendment that guarantees the rights of crime victims, that they be treated with dignity and respect and they have the right to be present at all judicial hearings.

Crime victims have come a long way from being left by the road side: from sitting on a park bench outside a courtroom to being present and speaking about the impact of the crime; from being admonished as perhaps the cause of the rape to now receiving careful medical care and treated with dignity and respect; from being ignored as a domestic violence victim to now receiving protective help and the offending spouse being arrested. Victims have moved from just being a piece of evidence to being the best witness to the crime—the

best piece of evidence and thus treated with respect and compassion.

However, a victim's journey is never over. The word "closure" is misleading for every day is lived with the loss of a loved one, with the memory of a violent attack, with nightmares about the safety of their possessions. All these factors and many more make their journey to wholeness and healing quite difficult and painful. Even the apology or repentance of the criminal brings little comfort although it may be one of the important moments in the healing process.

Along the crime victim's journey to recovery there are many "good Samaritans" who appear as family members, friends and support groups and the victim advocates provided by the state government. This attitude of compassion is summed up nicely in a statement (see next page) that a police chief in NY—a good Samaritan—affixed to the wall for his entire department to read, reflect on and implement. SJ



Tom Keevey was the former Assistant Chief for Victim Services in the NJ Division of Criminal Justice and is currently involved in restorative justice and earth justice issues.

TO ALL CRIME VICTIMS

Don't be afraid; you are in our hands.
A victim is the most important person ever
to come in this office either in person or by mail.
A victim is not dependent on us;
we are dependent on him/her.
A victim is not an interruption of our work.
He is the purpose of it . . . .
A victim is treated the way we would want our mother,
father, brother, wife, daughter, husband treated.
A victim is the person who brings us the crime.
It is our job to handle them efficiently and effectively
and reduce his/her trauma.

Attributed to Anthony Schembri, former Police Chief of Rye, NY. Schembri is the person on whom the main character of the television program, *The Commish*, was based.

Seeking Evil, Finding Only God

MELODY ERMACHILD CHAVIS

Many death penalty proponents believe that evil infects people like my clients, who must therefore be extinguished . . .

For twenty years I have searched for evil, and nowhere have I found it. I find causes and conditions aplenty, and I have found something that I wasn't looking for: inexhaustible quantities of love.

Suddenly, in every case—and it is always a surprise—I find someone giving love against all odds, someone reaching out where it seems nothing but hatred prevails, someone finding it in themselves to forgive against storms of bitter anger. These are often unexpected people, unsung heroes and heroines who want no thanks: a man's long ago juvenile hall counselor who comes to testify; a former special education teacher, retired with a bad heart, who flies on three airplanes to get to the trial to ask jurors to spare her former student's life.

Love, I have seen, is a force alive in the world.

Melody Ermachild Chavis is a writer, private investigator and longtime Zen practitioner at the Berkeley Zen Center. This essay is excerpted from *Not Turning Away* edited by Susan Moon © 2004 Shambhala Publications and used with permission. www.shambhala.com

Become A Subscriber Today

SACRED JOURNEY

THE JOURNAL OF FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

☐ 1 year $20 ($26 Int'l)
☐ 2 year $36 ($48 Int'l)

☐ Payment Enclosed
☐ Please Bill my Credit Card
VISA/MC/DISCOVER $ _____

Credit Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip+4 _____

Daytime Phone _____ Email _____

SEND COMPLETED FORM AND PAYMENT TO:
FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER, INC., 291 WITHERSPOON STREET, PRINCETON, NJ 08542-3227

YOU CAN SUBSCRIBE OR RENEW ONLINE AT WWW.FELLOWSHIPINPRAYER.ORG.

Renew Today

SACRED JOURNEY

THE JOURNAL OF FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

☐ 1 year $20 ($26 Int'l)
☐ 2 year $36 ($48 Int'l)

☐ Payment Enclosed
☐ Please Bill my Credit Card
VISA/MC/DISCOVER $ _____

Credit Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip+4 _____

Daytime Phone _____ Email _____

SEND COMPLETED FORM AND PAYMENT TO:
FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER, INC., 291 WITHERSPOON STREET, PRINCETON, NJ 08542-3227

YOU CAN SUBSCRIBE OR RENEW ONLINE AT WWW.FELLOWSHIPINPRAYER.ORG.

Send the Gift of

SACRED JOURNEY

THE JOURNAL OF FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

☐ 1 year $20 ($26 Int'l)
☐ 2 year $36 ($48 Int'l)

☐ Payment Enclosed
☐ Please Bill my Credit Card
VISA/MC/DISCOVER $ _____

_____
Credit Card Number Exp. Date

_____
Signature

Gift From:

_____
Name

_____
Address

_____
City/State/Zip+4

_____
Daytime Phone Email

Gift To (1):

_____
Name

_____
Address

_____
City/State/Zip+4

_____
Daytime Phone Email

Gift To (2):

_____
Name

_____
Address

_____
City/State/Zip+4

_____
Daytime Phone Email

SEND COMPLETED FORM AND PAYMENT TO:
FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER, INC., 291 WITHERSPOON STREET, PRINCETON, NJ 08542-3227

YOU CAN SUBSCRIBE OR RENEW ONLINE AT WWW.FELLOWSHIPINPRAYER.ORG.

SACRED JOURNEY
FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER, INC.
291 Witherspoon Street
Princeton, NJ 08542-3227

Change Service Requested

Nonprofit org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Hanover, PA 17331
Permit no. 4

ISSN 1096-5939